

## Holly J. Benton

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### **EDUCATION**

Current **PhD Program, Sociology, North Carolina State University**

2016 **M.A., Sociology, Indiana University of Pennsylvania (expected December 2016)**

*Concentration:* Social Stratification

*Thesis Title:* “The Experience of Hunger: Understanding Food Choices and Feeding Decisions in Low-Income Families”

*Committee Chair:* Dr. Melissa Swauger

*Summary:* Explores the mental, physical, material, and social labor required in and the meaning constructed by the food-related choices and decisions of low-income families as they seek to feed their families, especially during times when there may be limited availability of food supplies necessary to meet their needs.

Outstanding Graduate Student Award, 2013-2014

1998 **B.A., American Studies, Dickinson College**

Honors: *Cum laude*, Dean’s List

Dickinson College Humanities Program in England, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK, 1996-97

### **AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION/INTEREST**

Sociology of Food and Food Systems

Social Policy

Social Inequality/Stratification

Social Change/Movements

Global Sociology

Public Sociology

Environmental Sociology

Social Theory

### **RESEARCH IN PROGRESS**

Benton, Holly J. “Interrogating Class Mobility: Income and Material Hardship Among Individuals with Some College Education.”

Benton, Holly J. “This is a Weight(y) Issue: Obesity, Marginalized Bodies and Embodied Confinement.”

Benton, Holly J. and Melanie Hildebrandt. “Finding Dominance: Tracing the White Racial Frame in Food Security Research.” Anticipated journal submission March 2017.

Frye, Samuel L. and Holly J. Benton. “Graduate Students’ Journey to Becoming an Effective Instructor: Making Sense of Classroom Evaluations from Senior Faculty.”

## **PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS**

- 2016 “The Experience of Hunger: Understanding Food Choices and Feeding Decisions in Low-Income Families.” Paper presentation, IUP Graduate Scholars Forum, Indiana, PA, April 6, 2016.
- 2016 “The Experience of Hunger: Understanding Food Choices and Feeding Decisions in Low-Income Families.” Paper presentation, Sociology of Food Mini-Conference, Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, March 17-21, 2016.
- 2016 “This is a Weight(y) Issue: Obesity, Marginalized Bodies and Embodied Confinement.” Paper presentation, Power and the Body Mini-Conference, Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, March 17-21, 2016.
- 2016 “Engaging Students through Service Learning: Hunger Awareness and Seedling Distribution Projects.” Panel presentation with Dr. Melissa Swauger, Associate Professor, Lisa McCann, Master’s Student, and Dr. Kay Snyder, Emeritus Professor, IUP Sociology Department. Panel: Connecting Classroom and Community: Social Justice and Service Learning in the Sociological Curriculum, Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, March 17-21, 2016.
- 2015 “The Experience of Hunger: Understanding Food Choices and Feeding Decisions in Low-Income Families.” Paper presentation at the 2015 Association for Humanist Sociology Annual Meeting, Portland, OR, October 21-25, 2015.
- 2015 “Finding Dominance: Tracing the White Racial Frame in Food Security Research.” Paper presentation with Dr. Melanie Hildebrandt, Associate Professor, IUP Sociology Department, at the 2015 Association for Humanist Sociology Annual Meeting, Portland, OR, October 21-25, 2015.
- 2014 “Implications for Food Security: Understanding Food Choices and Feeding Decisions in Low-Income Families.” Paper presentation at the Society for the Study of Social Problems 2014 Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, August 15-17, 2014.
- 2014 “Implications for Food Security: Understanding Food Choices and Feeding Decisions in Low-Income Families.” Paper Presentation at IUP Graduate Scholars Forum, Indiana, PA, April 2, 2014.
- 2013 “Disability Inclusion & Empowerment” with Dr. Diane Shinberg, Assistant Professor and Lisa Kuzneski, Master’s Student, IUP Sociology Department. PASSHE Summit, Shippensburg University, Shippensburg, PA, November 21-22, 2013.

## **INVITED PRESENTATIONS**

- Sept. 2015 IUP Sociology Department, *Global Service Learning*, Dr. Melanie Hildebrandt, Instructor  
Invited lecture, “Food, Food Insecurity, and Food Justice”

Lecture to undergraduate service learning class concerning food environments, food insecurity issues and food justice movements. Special attention to local food insecurity issues in preparation for a service learning project.

- April 2015 IUP Sociology Department, *Principles of Sociology*, Mr. Samuel Frye, Instructor  
Invited lecture, "Food Security and Poverty"  
Provided background on relationship between food security and poverty highlighting food access problems and resulting health issues related to food insecurity.
- Feb. 2015 Eastern Sociological Society 2015 Annual Meeting, Workshop sponsored by ESS  
Committed on the Status of Women, "Navigating the Profession"  
Workshop Presenter, provided insight and advice to graduate students on how to maximize the graduate experience.
- Sept. 2014 IUP Sociology Department, "What I Wish I Had Known"  
Panel Member, discussed graduate school experience within the IUP Sociology Department, provided advice to incoming graduate students.
- April 2014 Hunger Awareness Week, Film Screening: *A Place at the Table*  
Sponsored by IUP Sociology Department  
Speaker, presented information on the links between food insecurity and obesity providing contextual information for the film screening audience.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

### **CLARION UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA**

Department of Social Sciences

Fall 2014 **Temporary Part-Time Instructor, Sociology**

*Sociology of Food, Undergraduate*

- Upper-level, writing intensive: This course examined the political, economic, cultural, and social forces shaping food production, distribution, and consumption both in the United States and the global food system. Special attention was given to examining structural inequities and the growing health, environmental and human rights concerns associated with a globalized food system.

*Race and Ethnic Relations, Undergraduate*

- Upper-level: This course examined how race and ethnicity are socially constructed and explored the ways in which racial and ethnic categories are maintained by social interaction, as well as social structures and institutions. Selected texts provided a comparative and historical grounding to the discussion of contemporary patterns of race and ethnic relations.

### **INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA**

Department of Philosophy

Fall 2013 **Temporary Part-Time Instructor** (November 12, 2013 to December 9, 2013)

*Philosophy of Food, Undergraduate*

Lecture Topics: Food and Aesthetics; Social and Cultural Aspects of Food; Globalization of Food; Alternative Food Choices and Consumption; Fair Trade; Alternative Food Networks.

### **OTHER TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

- Fall 2013     **Guest Lectures** (October 24, 2013 to November 11, 2013)  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Department of Philosophy  
Course: *Philosophy of Food*, Undergraduate Course, Dr. Eric Rubenstein  
Lecture Topics: Food and Morality; Ethics of Genetically Modified Food; Social, Political, and Economic Considerations of Genetically Modified Foods; Food Security; Food Safety.
- Spring 2013   **Guest Lecture** (April 30, 2013)  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Department of Sociology  
Course: *Disability and Society*, Undergraduate Course, Dr. Diane Shinberg  
“Disability and Social Policy: The Built World. The Social Environment.”  
Lecture and discussion on social policy, the historical development of disability policy, and merits and limitations of the Americans with Disabilities Act 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended 2008.

### **HONORS/AWARDS**

3MT Finalist, IUP Graduate Scholars Forum, April 2016  
Graduate Student Scholarship, IUP School of Graduate Studies and Research, 2015-2016  
Travel Award, Eastern Sociological Society, February 2016  
Outstanding Graduate Student Award 2013-2014, IUP Sociology Department, May 2014  
Graduate Assistantship, Full-Time, IUP Sociology Department, Spring 2014 and Fall 2013  
The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, Inducted April 2014  
Alpha Kappa Delta, International Sociology Honor Society, Inducted April 2014  
Golden Key International Honour Society, Inducted Spring 2014  
Global Service Learning, Minas Gerais, Brazil, Winter 2013  
Dickinson College Humanities Program in England, 1996-1997

### **OTHER EXPERIENCE**

**Freelance Editorial and Transcription Services**, February 2015 to present

- Paid and unpaid work providing bibliographic editing, copy editing, and data transcription services.

**Graduate Assistant**, Fall Semester 2013 to Spring Semester 2014

Department of Sociology, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA 15705

- Graduate Assistant to Dr. Melissa Swauger and Dr. Dana Hysock Witham. Attended classes; administered examinations; tutored students; graded small assignments; facilitated class activities. Served as coordinator for service learning project. Conducted literature reviews on special topics.

**Disability Claims Adjudicator**, September 2002 to August 2013

Disability Determination Service, Department of Labor and Industry, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Greensburg, PA 15605

- Processed and adjudicated claims for Social Security disability benefits according to federal regulations and policy. Analyzed objective and subjective medical findings according to federal agency policy in determining an individual's level of impairment. Contacted claimants and medical providers by phone to solicit additional information needed for claims processing.

**Income Maintenance Caseworker**, August 1999 to March 2001

Philadelphia County Assistance Office, Department of Public Welfare, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA 19132

- Reviewed, verified and processed applications for need-based benefits according to state regulations and policy. Conducted interviews with clients. Verified application information. Processed benefit eligibility and denials electronically.

### **UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

May 2015     **Seedling Project of Indiana County**, assisted in on-site seedling distribution to residents of Indiana County.

Spring 2014     **Service Learning Project Coordinator**, with Dr. Melissa Swauger  
Sociology of Family, Undergraduate Course, IUPUI Sociology Department  
Seedling Project: Coordinated and directed students involved in this project that sought to distribute seeds, seedlings, and gardening materials to low-income households in Indiana, PA. Coordinated with partnering agencies; developed advertising and other materials to facilitate project; solicited donations of materials; facilitated distribution of materials.  
Hunger Awareness Week: Assisted in preparation and facilitation of events including a food drive, film screening, and poverty simulation.

Spring 2014     **Member, President's Commission on the Status of Women**, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA.

2012             **Tax Preparer**, Money in Your Pocket Coalition, United Way and Just Harvest, Pittsburgh, PA.

### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

American Sociological Association, 2013, 2015-2016

Society for the Study of Social Problems, 2014

Eastern Sociological Society, 2015-2016

Association for Humanist Sociology, 2015